

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) A method for allowing various document signing functions to be performed by users at a plurality of remotely located computer-based systems coupled to a document computer-based system over a data network, the method comprising:

displaying an electronic document at one of the plurality of remotely located computer-based systems;

identifying one or more blocks of unedited text for at least one signature task;

uniquely identifying the identified blocks of unedited text;

assigning one or more other users to one or more of the blocks of text in a registered document;

allowing for review of the uniquely identifying blocks of unedited text, that are assigned to the one or more other users, for one or more of the assigned blocks of unedited text selecting an option from a list consisting of: an acceptance option and a decline option, and for executing a digital signature of the document;

registering documents at the document computer-based system, the registering comprising:

identifying designated blocks of unedited text; and

verifying the correctness of uniquely identified blocks of unedited text;

storing information of the users associated with the assigned blocks of unedited text of a registered document and digital signature certificates for users preregistered with the document computer-based system;

storing digital signatures of documents;

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storing the selections of the acceptance or decline options;
allowing retrieval of documents with previously assigned signature tasks; and
allowing retrieval of the stored digital signatures of a document and the stored users' selections.

4. (Previously Presented): The system of Claim 3, wherein the assigning one or more other users to one or more of the blocks of text further comprises assigning a completion deadline for assigned users to complete assigned actions.

5. (Previously Presented) A system for allowing various document signing functions, the system being coupled to a document signing server over a data network, the system comprising:

a user interface component for displaying an electronic document the user of the computer-based system desires to assign signing functions thereto, and for identifying one or more blocks of text for at least one signature task;

a processing component for uniquely identifying the identified blocks of unedited text; and

a browser component comprising:

an assigning component for assigning one or more other users to one or more of the uniquely identified blocks of unedited text in a registered document by the document signing server;

a signing component for allowing review of the assigned blocks of unedited text, that are assigned to the one or more other users, for one or more of the assigned blocks of unedited text selecting an option from a list consisting of: an acceptance option and a decline option, and for executing a digital signature of the document; and

a component for storing the selections of the acceptance or decline options.

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6. (Original): The system of Claim 5, wherein the assigning component further assigns a completion deadline for assigned users to complete assigned actions.

7-15. (Canceled)

16. (New) A method for allowing various document signing functions to be performed by users at a plurality of remotely located computer-based systems coupled to a document repository computer-based system over a data network, the method comprising:

registering an electronic document in a document repository computer-based system accessible over a data network;

displaying the registered document that is stored in the document repository system at one of the plurality of remotely located computer-based systems;

recording a designation of one or more areas of the registered document for signature tasks at the document repository system;

recording an assignment of one or more registered users of the document repository system to one or more of the designated areas of the registered document at the document repository system;

presenting for review the areas of the document that are assigned to the registered user of the document repository system;

recording a selection of at least one of an acceptance option or a decline option for each of the assigned areas of the document registered in the document repository system; and

executing an electronic signature of the assigned areas of the document.

17. (New) The method of Claim 16, wherein the registration of an electronic document includes uniquely identifying the document within the document repository system, uniquely designating the areas of the document that have been assigned for signature tasks, association of

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users of the document repository system with the designated areas of the document, and verification of the correctness of the document and the designated areas of the document.

18. (New) The method of Claim 16, wherein the registration of a user of the document repository system includes storage of information about the user assigned to designated areas of the document, and storage of the electronic signature credentials of the user.

19. (New) The method of Claim 17, further comprising:

allowing retrieval of registered documents with previously assigned signature tasks;
and

allowing retrieval of registered documents with previously executed electronic signatures.

20. (New) The method of Claim 16, wherein recording an assignment further comprises assigning a completion deadline for the assigned users to complete assigned actions.

21. (New) A document repository computer-based system for allowing various document signing functions, the system being coupled to a plurality of remotely located computer-based systems over a data network, the system comprising:

a first component configured to register an electronic document;

a second component configured to allow a registered user to view the stored electronic document at one of the plurality of remotely located computer-based systems;

a third component configured to record a designation of one or more areas of the document for signature tasks;

a fourth component configured to record an assignment of one or more users of the document repository system to one or more of the designated areas of the registered document;

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a fifth component configured to present for review the areas of the document that are assigned;

a sixth component configured to record a selection of at least one of an acceptance option or a decline option for each of the assigned areas of the document; and

a seventh component configured to execute an electronic signature of the assigned areas of the document.

22. (New) The system of Claim 21, wherein the document registration component includes the ability to uniquely identify a document within the document repository system, the ability to uniquely identify the areas of the document designated for signature, the ability to associate users of the document repository system with the designated areas of the document, and verification of the correctness of the document and the areas designated for signature.

23. (New) The system of Claim 21, wherein the user registration component includes information about the users assigned to the designated areas of the document and the electronic signature credentials of the user.

24. (New) The system of Claim 21, further comprising:

an eighth component configured to allow retrieval of registered documents with previously assigned signature tasks; and

a ninth component configured to allow retrieval of registered documents with previously executed electronic signatures.

25. (New) The system of Claim 21, wherein the fourth component is configured to assign a completion deadline for the assigned users to complete assigned actions.

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